

trial of Gov. Evan Mecham.⁴³⁰ Eckstein also served as counsel for Babbitt on one occasion when, as Attorney General, Babbitt was sued for defamation and turned to Brown, Valassis & Bain for representation. On other occasions, Babbitt referred potential clients to Eckstein.

The two men considered each other good friends, stemming mostly from their law practice together and their common activity in Arizona Democratic politics. Over the years, they socialized occasionally together with their spouses, and saw each other regularly at Democratic fund-raisers, several of which Eckstein hosted or managed for various Arizona Democrats. When Babbitt came to Washington, D.C., Eckstein and he remained in occasional contact, particularly when Babbitt was under serious consideration in 1993 and again in 1994 for appointment to the U.S. Supreme Court. During that time, sensational, untrue news stories about Babbitt were jeopardizing his prospects, and Eckstein attempted to intercede with the responsible journalists to get them to retract or curtail their stories. Ultimately, an investigation by the United States Attorney in Arizona cleared Babbitt of the cloud generated by these reports. Eventually, White House discussion of Babbitt as a high court nominee reached the point where Babbitt turned to Eckstein for assistance in drafting an acceptance speech, in case what seemed like an imminent offer should be made.

Babbitt testified to his high opinion of Eckstein, calling him “an honest guy and a good man,” whom Babbitt had not known to lie and whom Babbitt knew to be well-regarded in the Phoenix community.⁴³¹ He confirmed that, as of early 1995, the two men were on good terms,

⁴³⁰The trial resulted in the Republican Governor’s conviction on the articles of impeachment and ouster from office.

⁴³¹Babbitt G.J. Test., July 7, 1999, at 58.